

THE Spacemaker

NEWSLETTER

VOL. 1, No. 16

McClellan Air Force Base, CALIF. (<http://www.mcclellan.af.mil/PA/spacemaker.html>)

APRIL 27, 2000

TAKE NOTE

Notary hours changed

Effective immediately, hours for notary service at the base legal office have changed. There is no longer a notary available on Thursdays. New hours are Monday through Wednesday 8:30 - 11:30 a.m. and Friday 8:30 - 11:30 a.m. For more information, call 643-6790.

Chiefs gather May 5

The McClellan Chiefs Group hosts the 10th Annual Northern California Gathering of Chiefs May 5, 6 p.m. at the Community Center. McClellan's last gathering is open to E-9s in all branches of the Armed Forces, active and retired.

Tickets are \$20. Appropriate dress is mess dress or semi-formal uniform and after-five dress for civilians.

For reservations, call Chief Master Sgt. James Sullivan, 643-6808; Chief Master Sgt. Robert Krause, 643-6601, or the McClellan Protocol Office, 643-2015.

SMW meets May 6

The Society of Military Widows, Sacramento Chapter, hosts a joint luncheon with the Fairfield Chapter May 6, noon, at Club McClellan. Check-in is 11 a.m. Tickets are \$17. For more information, call Edna Brown at 422-0891.

SNEAK PEEK

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"Completing the mission of McClellan Air Force Base with professionalism and honor"



Courtesy photo

McClellan Airman "Best in AFMC"

Senior Airman Steven Henshaw, 77th Medical Group, performs systems maintenance on the MDG network. Henshaw was recently named Air Force Materiel Command's Outstanding Airman of the Year. He competes at Air Force level in May.

ALC continues to shape its legacy

By Jim Barone
SM-ALC Director

We have inherited a proud legacy at McClellan Air Force Base -- a legacy filled with accomplishment. Our task now is to preserve that legacy in the challenging days ahead.

Over the decades the many missions we supported kept us strong and free. From the P-38s, B-17s and B-25s of World War II, to the stalwart F-111, F-117 Stealth Fighter, KC-135 tankers, and the A-10 Thunderbolt of today, the men and women of this proud installation have sustained America's arsenal during times of peace and war. But we also became the eyes, ears, and nervous system of our nation's military might as we supported the ever-vigilant sensors, radar systems, and global communications networks keeping our country alert, informed, and ready.

While workloads changed dramatically

over the decades, the one constant has been the McClellan work force, which has consistently performed its mission with skill and integrity. The men and women of McClellan have risen to meet every challenge.

Today we confront our final challenge. We still have a vital mission to perform. We still have aircraft on the ramp and threat systems in our shops that must be safely returned to our warfighters. At the same time we must transfer critical weapon systems and inventories to new bases while maintaining uninterrupted capability and support to our combat forces around the world.

And we must take care of the thousands of people who still come to work here each day. These are the everyday

See Legacy ... Page 2

Pharmacy expands mail order services

By Staff Sgt. Kathleen T. Rhem
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON -- Department of Defense healthcare experts are planning several ways to improve and expand pharmacy services for active and retired service members and their families.

A step that should appease some retiree groups is a pilot program to provide a pharmacy benefit to Medicare-enrolled military retirees and their families.

The pilot program will open up for enrollment June 1 in two randomly selected sites, Fleming, Ky., and Okeechobee, Fla., and could affect up to 6,000 individuals. Service will begin July 1, said Navy Capt. Charlie Hostettler, deputy director for pharmacy programs in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs.

The Pharmacy Redesign Pilot will make the National Mail Order program available, and provide a retail pharmacy benefit, to retirees over age 65 in those two areas.

"It will entail a \$200 annual enrollment fee and set cost shares, which are \$8 for each 90-day prescription through the mail order

pharmacy and 20 percent cost share for each 30-day prescription through a retail outlet," Hostettler said. Enrollees must also have Medicare Part B coverage to be eligible for this program.

Hostettler said program progress reports are due to Congress in October 2000 and in April and October 2001. Congress would then decide whether to expand the program to retirees nationwide.

Plan beneficiaries will be encouraged to order their prescriptions by mail as much as possible because both they and the government save money, said Mary Gerwin, deputy assistant secretary of defense for health affairs. "We get better prices, because we get better volume discounts," she said.

In addition to these planned improvements to the pharmacy benefit, DoD health officials have ambitious plans for a complete overhaul in the future. Hostettler said, the biggest hurdle for managers today is the several pharmacy systems in place under the umbrella of DoD pharmacy services. The fiscal year 2000 budget called for a uniform formulary across the DoD healthcare system by Oct. 1. A formulary are drugs on hand.

"Today, we have five managed care contractors that take care of the 12 Tricare regions," he said. "Each has its own pharmacy benefit management. Each has a retail pharmacy network set up, and they have firewalls set up between them."

"It's difficult for mobile military patients to take a prescription from one area and get it filled in another area," Hostettler said. Beneficiaries in this situation must sometimes pay out of pocket and file reimbursement claims; a time-consuming and often inefficient process.

"You end up having to work around the system, instead of the system working for you," he said.

DoD proposes to consolidate the contractor, mail order and military treatment facility systems, Gerwin said.

According to Hostettler, the objective is straightforward: a uniform, consistent and equitable pharmacy benefit.

"We want to optimize our resources as much as we can and maintain quality," he said. "We all win when we conserve dollars. The more efficient a plan is, the more the plan can do for beneficiaries."

Legacy continued from ... Front Page

heroes -- for they come here each day knowing that all too soon they must leave forever. These are the people and families for whom we *must* remain vigilant to ensure they receive the support they have so clearly earned— whether they choose to retire or to move to new bases or to new careers.

Almost daily we say, "Farewell," to highly skilled and valued members of the McClellan team. For those of us who remain, our final mission will be no less daunting than those missions we have accomplished so proudly in the past. For upon our shoulders rests the task of forever preserving the proud legacy of McClellan Air Force Base.

Together, we will preserve for posterity the noble legacy, heritage, and contributions of McClellan Air Force Base. This is our challenge. This is our goal. And I am proud to be a part of the team that is now poised to complete the mission of McClellan with professionalism and honor.

Thank you all for your tenacity, perseverance, commitment to excellence, and incredible strength. I am privileged to stand amongst you. I am honored to be your leader and to serve as the first civilian to lead this magnificent jewel known as the Sacramento Air Logistics Center. I look forward to working together with you to meet the challenges ahead.

SPACEMAKER

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Air Force Vision

"Air Force people building the world's most respected air and space force ... global power and reach for America"

Air Force Materiel Command Vision

"Quality Systems for America's Air Force"

Sacramento Air Logistics Center Vision

"Completing the mission of McClellan AFB with professionalism and honor"

New AFMC boss sees excellence in diversity

By Libby Van Hook

AFMC Public Affairs

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio -- The Air Force Materiel Command's new commander is following a career track that's destined him to lead the Air Force's most diverse command.

When Air Force Systems Command and Air Force Logistics Command merged in 1992, Gen. Ronald Yates, AFMC's first commander, envisioned the value of combining logistics and acquisition experience to create "materielists." These would be leaders who combine extensive logistics and acquisition experience.

"I was his first experiment," Gen. Lester L. Lyles said. "He took me, a person with nothing but acquisition, science and technology in his background, and made me vice commander of a logistics center."

Several months later Lyles took command of that center — Ogden Air Logistics Center at Hill Air Force Base, Utah. Following that, he commanded the Space and Missile Systems Center, Los Angeles Air Force Base, Calif., giving him the unique experience of having led both a logistics center and a product center.

"I certainly got an appreciation and understanding for the mission, people and excellence in our logistics community," said Lyles. "I look at myself as being not just a logistics commander, not just an acquisition commander, but a materielist commander with experience on both sides. I hope what I bring to AFMC is a blend of the two."

Lyles comes to AFMC following duties as the Air Force vice chief of staff and is still formulating what his priorities will be following his assumption of command. First and foremost, he is continuing the excellence and efforts in cost control that former AFMC commander Gen. George Babbitt began.

Another priority is to reinstate acquisition excellence associated with the command.

"As much as I value and put emphasis on the support logistics aspect of the command, I think a lot of people have forgotten that AFMC has a major acquisition role," said Lyles. "AFMC grows and is responsible for Air Force acquisition people, responsible for acquisition organizations, and provides and maintains the entire acquisition infrastructure."

"Re-instating excellence is making sure when people think about acquisition excellence, anywhere in the country, they think of AFMC as a model of that," said Lyles. "When they think of acquisition reform and acquisition innovation, I want them to think AFMC."

Lyles' next priority is science and technology.

"We're living on technologies out of the 60s, 70s, and 80s," he said. "My fear is if we don't continue fairly robust science and technology for the future, we're not planting the seed for Air Force systems in the year 2015 and beyond."

During the next five years Lyles believes AFMC will be defined by one word - excellence.

"The command has always been associated with excellent products. I think we can improve on some things, and I think we can do even better in supporting the users," he said. "We need to be good stewards of the taxpayer money, we need to look at and foster partnerships with industry and other agencies in order to do our mission even more efficiently."

How the command manages and structures its acquisition programs is one area the general will be focusing on. Another is logistics support.

"AFMC proved they could do the job in Kosovo," he said. "I'll continue the great things Gen. Babbitt has already done in those areas."

Lyles feels the most significant challenge facing AFMC is one of resources — particularly manpower.

Another area of concern is dollar resources, but he feels the jury is still out on this issue. He's not convinced AFMC needs more money to get things done.

"I'll be looking very closely at whether or not we can improve in science and technology and improve our infrastructure without asking for a large infusion of new money," he said.

In keeping with the Air Force vision, the general said AFMC will be putting more emphasis on space activities.

"We will be putting more resources in the future of the space program. I see that area growing tremendously," he said. "However, that doesn't take away from the air mission. We need both capabilities."

"We're truly an aerospace organization,



Gen. Lester L. Lyles

and we can't do our missions anywhere near as efficiently without having a blend of all our capabilities."

When asked what he hoped his friends and colleagues would say if they were asked what principles his words and actions testify to, Lyles said ...open, cooperative and collegial. He said he firmly believes in an open door policy.

"I'm serious about that," said Lyles, emphasizing that he expects people to keep him informed. "Don't be afraid to pass information to me, good or bad."

"The three word motto I've used in every one of my commands is 'communicate, communicate, communicate.'"

He said he'll be looking for ways he can communicate with the AFMC people, from the young airmen to officers, and the civilian force.

"More importantly, they can communicate with me," he said.

Lyles said AFMC is the center of everything the Air Force is about and a very necessary part of accomplishing the mission.

"The mission of the Air Force is to fly and fight, and in order to do that we need to have great systems," he said. "AFMC is about providing the capability to support our national security objectives and allow our people to fly and fight effectively. I believe AFMC is extremely valuable and will continue to be that. My vision, my goal, is to make sure that it not only stays in that posture but grows." (AFMCNS)

Missing Easter eggs found at CDC Friday



Janel Reed, daughter of Stanley and Brenda Reed, gets the golden egg.



Jasmine Gooden (left), daughter of Senior Airman Tracy and LaTiffany Gooden, eye spies Dana Maniscalco's (right), daughter of Senior Airmen Daryl and Nichole Maniscalco, Easter eggs.

Dana Maniscalco, daughter of Senior Airmen Daryl and Nichole Maniscalco, puts the colored eggs in her basket.



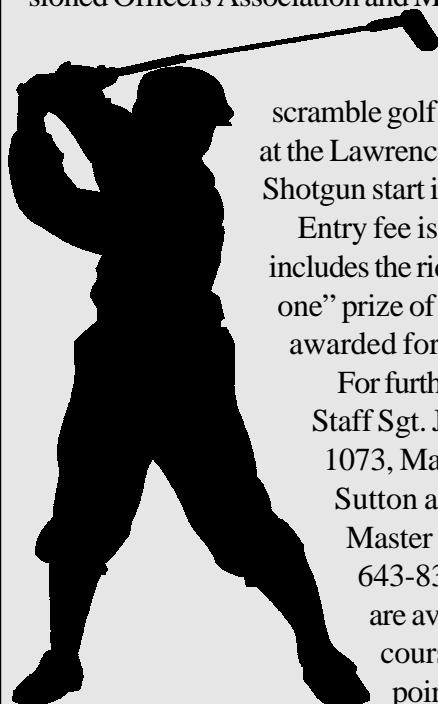
U.S. Air Force photos by Sandra Kosmatin



Ryan Rupp, son of Navy Chief Petty Officer David and Lesley Rupp, looks to see who is watching before his get-away with the eggs.

Cinco de Mayo Golf Tournament

The Air Force Sergeants Association, Noncommissioned Officers Association and McClellan Latino



Club are sponsoring a four-person-scramble golf tournament May 5, at the Lawrence Links golf course. Shotgun start is 7:30 a.m.

Entry fee is \$30 per person and includes the riding cart. A "hole in one" prize of **\$15,000** will be awarded for hole No. 10.

For further information call Staff Sgt. Jim Morrison at 643-1073, Master Sgt. Kevin Sutton at 643-6808, or Master Sgt. Juan Gomez at 643-8343. Sign up sheets are available at the golf course or from the above points of contact.

Bike commute day spares the air May 18

Bike commute day, part of California Bicycle Commute Week 2000, is May 18. McClellan has participated in this event for nearly a decade. Past commutes have seen more than 200 members of Team McClellan biking to work in support of this event. This is the last opportunity for McClellan to participate in the noon rally around the state capitol in downtown Sacramento. The rally even has a state legislator from Stockton biking to Sacramento on this day. The rally is not a race, just an opportunity to spare the air another day. In the past McClellan has been recognized by state officials for bike participation including a plaque displayed in the Environmental Management Directorate.

Most of the ride downtown will be on bike lanes and trails. The ride is held rain or shine. Helmets are required to ride.

The commute to the state capitol and back will be lead by experienced rally riders from EM. This will be a historic commute for Team McClellan. Only a desire to have a good and safe time is needed to join the team. The team will leave McClellan at 11 a.m., and return at 2 p.m., May 18. Refreshments and valet bike parking are available at the rally.

Those interested in the final ride to the capitol should call Danny Durkee, Bryant Griffith, or Ralph Munch at 643-3672, Ext. 473, or e-mail gregory.schwei@mccllellan.af.mil. (Information provided by Gregory Schwei, EM)

Twenty-year search comes to close

By Staff Sgt. Alan Williams

Chief of Internal Information, Yokota AB, Japan

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan -- Imagine 20 years of seemingly endless search, from one dead-end lead to the next, to find the mother you've never known. That's exactly what happened to a sergeant here.

Until two weeks ago, Master Sgt. Charles Young, superintendent of 374th Civil Engineering Squadron Readiness Flight, had never spoken a word to his mother until his brother, John Sanders, a resident of Elk City, Okla., called to tell him that their mother was alive and well.

"For 20 years I searched for her on and off from city-to-city, and state-to-state," said 38-year-old Young. "It's hard to believe that, at last, my search is over. But, this is just the beginning."

Young's separation from his mother began with the divorce of his parents when he was 6 months old. He isn't sure what the reasons for the divorce were, and his father never really discussed it, but he always wondered where she was and felt as though something was missing from his life.

"I've always had curiosity about my mother. The older I got, the more curious I became," said Young, who, along with his wife Mutsuko, has three children, Kouyo, 16, Tanya, 14, and Annie, 8.

Young's plight to find his mother began around 1980 while he was still living at home with his father and stepmother. When he turned 17 he asked his father for help to find her. As it turned out, his mother, Bonnie Collins, now a resident of Sacramento, Calif., had remarried and given birth to two more sons, John, and Larry Sanders.

After the end of her second marriage she was separated from Young's brothers for undisclosed reasons.

When she attempted to find them she was faced with the horrible rumor that her two younger sons had been killed in an accident.

For 24 years, Collins lived with the thought that two of her children were deceased. Understandably, this caused her great pain. But, she remained strong and persevered through her sorrow.

The same story about the accident was told to Young when he was 17. However, 16 years later he was shocked by reality while stationed at McClellan Air Force Base when he received a call from his, supposedly dead brother, John. John was very much alive, married, with three kids.

"I had to ask him a million questions just to verify who he was, because I thought he was dead. He (John) said it only took him about five minutes to get a number for me from one of those 'find a loved one' organizations," Young said.

Within two weeks, Young was in Oklahoma, visiting his brother. Since that first meeting, they have become pretty close, he said.

Later, Collins married a third time. This marriage was cut short by the death of her husband. After his passing, poor health caused her



U. S. Air Force photo by Sandra Kosmatin

Bonnie Collins poses in Whitten Park while visiting McClellan Air Force Base April 13. Collins, a Sacramento resident, has been the subject of a 20-year search by her son Master Sgt. Charles Young, Yokota Air Base, Japan.

to lose her job and she found it hard to handle the stress of managing a household as well as dealing with the loss of her husband.

She told Young that before she realized it, she was homeless. For almost five years, she lived in a well-kept tent on the American River, in Sacramento. She survived on her deceased husband's retirement annuity, which was delivered to a post office box she had set up.

Not long ago, she was discovered by a Sacramento County Sheriff's Deputy who helped her get back on her feet. Collins entered a program, which helped her re-establish ties with the community, such as employment and a place to live.

During his search, Young tracked his mother to Sacramento and even located several women who shared his mother's name.

Ironically, during his assignment at McClellan, there was a brief period when Young actually lived near where his mother lived on the banks of the American River.

Once Collins was back on her feet, she found Sanders, who in turn contacted Young here.

"I just got my first letter from her the other day. I still think I'm dreaming. I just can't believe this is happening," Young said. "All I want in return, is her in my life and her love. I want her to be a part of my children's lives."

FOCUS CENTER

This section contains some of the job announcements available at the McClellan Air Force Base FOCUS Center. For additional information, contact the FOCUS Center, Bldg. 9, at 643-5661. The center is open until 7 p.m. Thursdays. Note: Copies of the vacancy announcements are available in the FOCUS Center. Review the announcement and contact the agency for KSAs and/or additional information.

Position: Supv inventory Mgmt Specialist, GS-2010-09
Annc: 2000-55MS
Close: May 1
Location: Sacramento, CA
Agency: Veterans Health Admin
POC: Barbara Nelson (925) 372-2120
Remarks: See note.

Position: Program Analyst, GS-343-09/12
Annc: SNR-00-11
Close: May 12
Location: Folsom, CA
Agency: Dept of Energy
POC: (916) 353-4566
Remarks: See note.

Position: Housing Management Specialist, GS-1173-11
Annc: 00-392-1CP
Close: May 5
Location: Alameda, CA
Agency: US Coast Guard
POC: (800) 842-8740
Remarks: See note.

Position: Auditor, GS-511-05/12
Annc: OIG-00-153
Close: May 4
Location: Sacramento, CA
Agency: Health & Human Services
POC: (202) 619-0146
Remarks: See note.

Position: Material Handler, WG-6907-06
Annc: VA-22-00
Close: April 28
Location: San Francisco, CA
Agency: US Mint
POC: Marilyn Marshall (415) 575-7844
Remarks: See note.

Position: Secretary (Office Automation), GS-318-06
Annc: BBC00-001
Close: May 3
Location: Beale AFB, CA
Agency: Air Force
POC: (210) 977-2716
Remarks: See note.

Position: Legal Clerk, GS-986-05/06
Annc: WA-CG-00-101105
Close: May 15
Location: Sacramento, CA
Agency: Secretary of Interior
POC: (202) 606-2700
Remarks: See note.

Position: Employee Relations Specialist, GS-230-09/12
Annc: 00-RB-101
Close: May 1
Location: San Francisco, CA
Agency: US Mint
POC: Charles Gisvold (202) 354-7854
Remarks: See note.

Position: Environmental Protection Specialist, GS-0028-12
Annc: BIA-PR-00-09
Close: April 28
Location: Sacramento, CA
Agency: Bureau of Indian Affairs
POC: Inga Hall (916) 978-5471
Remarks: See note.

Position: Personnel Staffing & Classification Spec, GS-201-11/12

Annc: VA-19-00
Close: April 27
Location: San Francisco, CA
Agency: US Mint
POC: Karen Piotrowski (415) 575-7844
Remarks: See note.

Non-Federal Jobs

Position: Administrative Technician
Salary: \$2,551 - \$3,101
Close: May 15
Location: Placerville, CA
Agency: El Dorado County
POC: (530) 621-5565
Remarks: See note.

Position: Safety Specialist
Location: Folsom, CA
Agency: Pride Industries
Website: <http://www.prideindustries.com>
Remarks: Copies of the job announcement are available in the FOCUS Center. Review the announcement and contact the agency for additional information.

Secretarial job fair



The FOCUS Center is sponsoring a secretarial job fair today, 1 - 4 p.m., in the Chapel Annex, Bldg. 1420.

The fair is open to all McClellan employees, civilian and military. For more information, call Greg Eason at 643-5661.

Note: Administrative leave is not authorized for this function.

Movies



Movies start at 7 p.m., unless otherwise noted, in Bldg. 1417. Movies are subject to change.

The Next Best Thing - Friday

Starring: Rupert Everett, Madonna

Abbie and Robert are best friends with a lot in common. When too many cocktails and a twist of fate takes them to a new level of intimacy, they become parents. It may not be the perfect family, but it's the next best thing. (PG - 13 mature content, nudity and language)

My Dog Skip - Saturday

Starring: Frankie Muniz, Diane Lane

In 1942, Willie is a shy and gawky eight-year-old boy in Yazoo, Miss. He is an only child, ignored at school and uncomfortable with girls. On Willie's ninth birthday, he receives a terrier puppy. With a little canine help, Willie starts becoming "one of the boys." (PG- some violence and mild language)

Final Destination - Sunday

Starring: Devon Sawa, Kristen Cloke

When one of the passengers on an airliner bound for Paris has a vision of the plane exploding and crashing, he and six others leave before it takes off. Strangely, the plane really does crash. Soon, each of the seven survivors begins to die mysteriously; and it's up to those left behind to figure out what happened before they die, too. (R - violence and language)

NAF sale

The non-appropriated funds resale store will host its sale Wednesday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in Bldg. 263F. Payment options include cash, check and credit card.

Youth Center

■ **Today:** Open recreation, 2-6 p.m.; open gym, 2-3 p.m.; open snack bar, 2-5 p.m.; advanced gymnastics, 3:15-4:15 p.m.; Tae Bo Aerobics, 6:15-7:15 p.m., ages 11 and up, free. Moms, Pops, and Tots, 10-11 a.m.

■ **Friday:** Open recreation, 2-6 p.m.; open snack bar 2-6 p.m.; open gym, 2-6 p.m. Pre-teen night, ages 9-12, 6:30-9 p.m.

■ **Saturday:** Open recreation and snack bar from noon to 5 p.m. Art Club meets at noon.

■ **Sunday:** Closed

■ **Monday:** Open recreation and gym, 2-6 p.m.; open snack bar, 2-5 p.m.

■ **Tuesday:** Open recreation, 2-6 p.m.; open gym, 4:15-6 p.m.; open snack bar, 2-5 p.m.; beginning gymnastics, 3:15-4:15 p.m.

■ **Wednesday:** Open recreation, 2-6 p.m.; open gym, 2-5:15 p.m.; open snack bar, 2-5 p.m.; beginning dance lessons, 5:30-6:30 p.m.



Above: "Chuck," a hand-puppet, is directed by puppeteer Ed Middleton during the show "Little Red Riding Hood" hosted by the base library April 20.

Right: Youths from the child development center look on as the characters come to life. The event was held in honor of the Month of the Military Child.



U.S. Air Force photos by Jennifer Vargas

Base library hosts youth puppet show

Youth center sponsors "fishing expo"

By Jennifer Vargas

Staff Writer

Youths ages 9 to 16 are invited to Rafferty Swimming Pool Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., to test the waters of McClellan's first-ever "fishing expo" dubbed "Go Fish."

The swimming pool, according to Karen Sanders, McClellan Youth Center, is being turned into a fishing pond and stocked with more than 200 catfish for the event.

The youth center, in conjunction with the Department of Fish and Game, is supplying all the equipment for the event.

"We just ask that people supply sunscreen, sunglasses and hats for self-protection from the sun," Sanders said.

Cost is \$5 for the event and includes lunch, as well as a variety of activities.

"We'll have several booths set up for the kids," said Sanders. "They'll have an opportunity to learn about boat safety, casting, cleaning fish and more."

The idea for the fishing expo came about in a suggestion from Jack Lytol, 77th Civil Engineering Squadron, who thought it would be a great idea to introduce youths to the sport of fishing.

"Go Fish combines an opportunity for McClellan kids to learn about water safety, go fishing and have a fun day," said Lytol.

Prizes are also being awarded for the person who catches the most fish.

Parents may also purchase lunch for \$3. For more information, or to pre-register, call the youth center at 643-2074 or 643-3946. Youths may register the day of the event, however, only 50 slots are available.



Thrift Savings Plan open season set to begin

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas — Federal employees will once again have the opportunity to participate in or make changes to their current election during the Thrift Savings Plan open season May 15 - July 31.

TSP is a federal civilian employee voluntary retirement savings and investment plan with three funds available to the employee: G - Government Securities Index Investment Fund, F - Bond Index Fund, and the C - Common Stocks Index Fund. Participants can choose to invest in any combination of the three funds.

"Two main features of TSP are before-tax savings and tax-deferred earnings," explained Christine Watkins, employee relations specialist, Civilian Personnel Operations at the Air Force Personnel Center. "This means the contributions made to TSP come out of the participant's pay before taxes, and the earnings are not taxed until the money is received."

Other benefits of the TSP program include a choice of investment options, interfund transfers, loans from the employee's own contributions and earnings, in-service withdrawals and portable benefits if the individual leaves federal service.

"Contribution limits set by the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board are based upon an employee's retirement system," explained Watkins.

"Employees covered by the Federal Employees' Retirement System can contribute up to 10 percent of their basic pay each pay period and the government will provide matching funds up to 4 percent. In addition, the government will contribute an automatic 1 percent of an individual's basic pay to their account each pay period whether they contribute or not. This brings the maximum government contribution to 5 percent.

"Employees covered by the Civil Service Retirement System can contribute up to 5 percent of basic pay each pay period, but do not receive any agency contributions" she said.

Additional information on TSP funds can be found in the Summary of the Thrift Savings Plan for Federal Employees. A copy of this booklet and other TSP information can be accessed through the TSP homepage or the Benefits and Entitlements Service Team homepage.

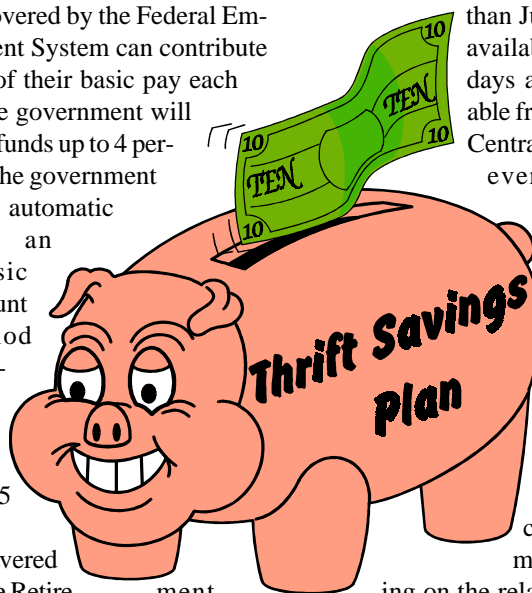
Employees whose base is serviced by the Air Force Personnel Center will make their TSP election or change through the BEST automated system by phone or Web no later

than July 31. The system is available 21 hours a day, 7 days a week. It is unavailable from midnight to 3 a.m. Central Standard Time each evening for systems backup. In addition, the Employee Benefits Information System Web site is unavailable from 7 a.m. to 10 a.m. CST on Sundays for maintenance.

Employees can access the Web-automated system by clicking on the related site listed below,

or access the telephone-automated system or a benefits counselor by calling 1-800-997-2378, or 527-2378 if calling within the San Antonio area. Hearing Impaired employees can access a benefits counselor by calling 1-800-382-0893 or 565-2276. Overseas employees will call toll-free by dialing an AT&T or MCI direct access number for the country they are in, then dialing the BEST-line 800-997-2378.

Benefits counselors are available Monday - Friday, from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. CST. The best times to reach a counselor are between 8-11 a.m. and 1:30-4 p.m. CST. (AFPN)



SWAP MEET

For Sale

Car -- 91 Mercury Grand Marquis LS, V8, pampered, exc cond, orig owner, all power, silver with Landeav top, \$4,200. Call 363-0889.

Truck -- 95 Ford F150 pickup--Eddie Bauer edition, 5-spd, 30,200 miles, tow pkg, bed liner, duel tanks, alarm, AC, cruise, power windows and mirrors, and more, \$10,000. Call 392-2961.

Piano -- Piano with bench, exc cond, \$600. Call 348-6977 eves.

Travel Trailer -- 84 Travel Trailer-Companion/Kit 23 ft, self contained, AC, stove, frig, microwave, shower and tub. Call 392-2961.

Miscellaneous

Moving sale -- 18 ft Motor home, TV, VCR, bike, furniture, mens clothing and household goods. Call 334-3246.

Yard sale -- Furniture and household items. Saturday, 5620 Luce Avenue, Wherry Housing. Call 331-8139.

Editor's note: Swap ads are a free, space-available-only service for military members, civil service employees, retirees and associated family members possessing current ID cards. The ads must be for the personal use of the card holder.

Only a home phone or address may be used in the ad; no base extensions or base e-mail addresses are allowed, except for dormitory residents (residential status must be stated on

ad). Personal e-mail addresses will be accepted. Drop off ads at Bldg. 200, room 125. Swap ads will not be published without a signature.

The deadline is noon, Wednesday for possible publication in the following Thursday's issue. Only one Swap ad per household per week, up to 50 words, may be submitted.

However, the ad can apply to more than one category, such as items wanted/trade, vehicles, furniture and yard sales. Spacemaker reserves the right to edit. No ads for money-making businesses, including daycare, or the sale of firearms or firearm accessories will be accepted. To run a swap ad again, it must be resubmitted. For more information, call the Spacemaker at 643-6100.